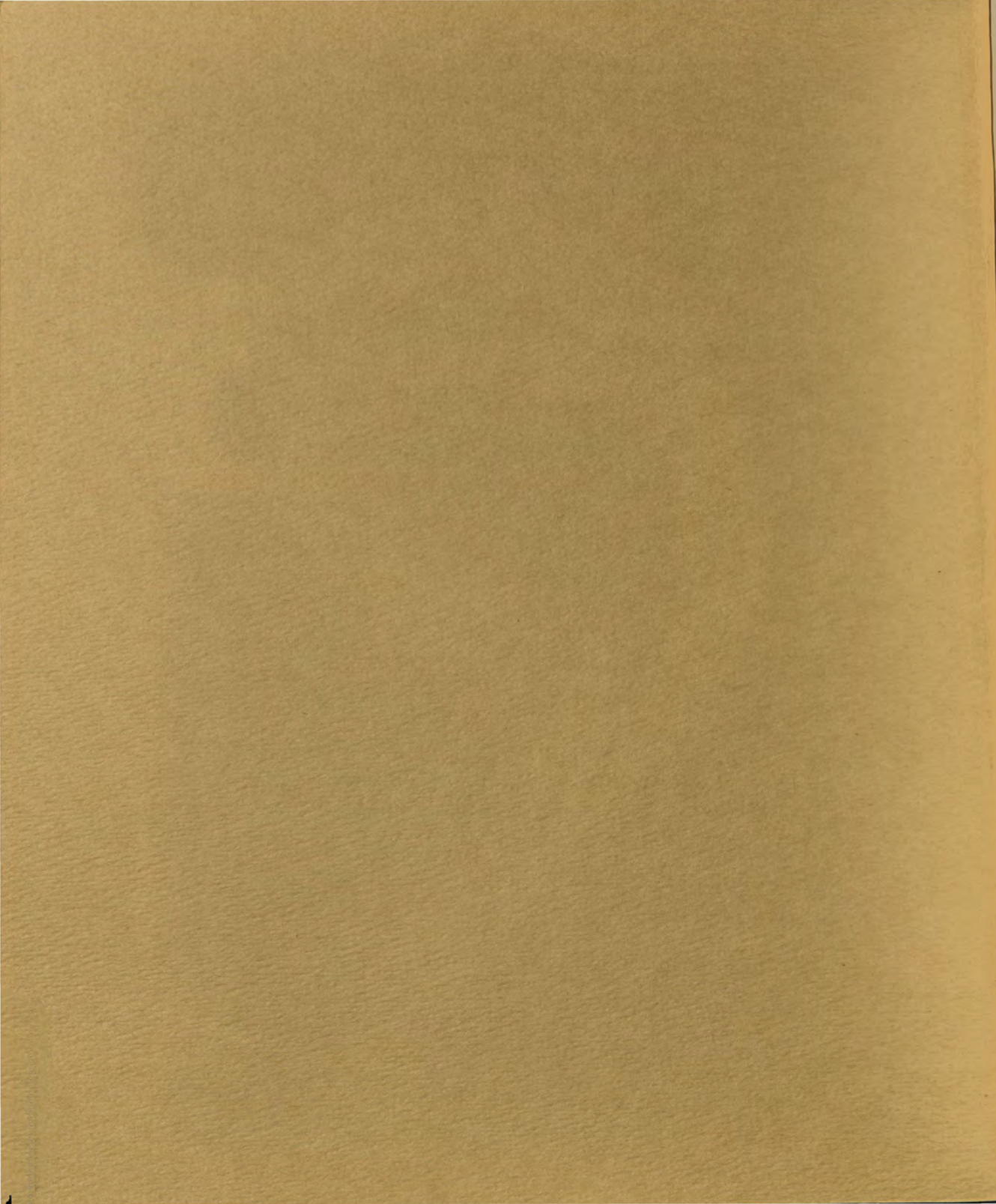




**CHRYSA LIS**





# preface:

Believe it or not, we have actually printed two editions of the Chrysalis this year.

In previous secure years those in charge of putting forth this magazine, the only creative publication the entire college has to its name, have not had the worry of money. We knew that father Business Department would fork out begrudged funds for yet another literary magazine. Oh, for those days when Madison was catching up to the threshold of the twentieth century, and literary magazines were quiet parcels of mealy mouthed love songs composed to our ever present and impotent gray January walls. You are no longer on the threshold, Madison. By demonstrating that you no longer feel that literary magazines are of any importance, you have shown that you have passed the nineteen hundreds on to the time of cybernetic wastelands, forgetting that when the sun sets, you, as well as your penny pinching misplaced priorities, are shadowed. Is this not the attitude that drove a generation away from your too well protected harbor seeking a more sensitive public in Europe?

We will not be driven away. Is it not grand that no one will ever know that Madison stultified its students' creativity? Madison, your harbor is too well protected by the paranoia that drives the creative people away to a receptive but challenging docking. We who have remained did not stagnate. We made of your retroactive priorities a challenge for a free and receptive magazine without fear of punishment.

Marc Taylor  
Editor-in-Chief





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# blade of grass

Something like grass stirred my mind.  
I chose one blade, slit on seam  
to hold in hollow of my thumbs,  
half blade. Drawing air, I blew

one greenly simple, shade of song  
to bind you, bring you home,  
Shatter your silent storm  
of interminable Israels,

to heal you as I have grown  
from stumbling to the futile falls  
that bind me, have brought me home  
to tune my life to blade of grass.

Margaret Horne Steiner

## SPRING PIGEON

The springing grass bore the body  
like a smoky pearl on its triumphant <sup>green</sup> queen.  
With no winter's stinging waste of compunction,  
it concentrated every shouting ounce  
to flinging celebration  
and overpowering dank and dying things,  
A pigeon killed in spring  
soaked, bullet-hole and all, into beauty.

Deborah Fairfield

# a manner of Speaking

These people whose  
Delinquent shoes  
So often go astray  
To wander where  
The grass is spare  
Or withered quite away,

These erring soles  
Know well two poles  
In straight lines nearest join,  
That sidewalk heat  
Is bad for feet  
And thick grass hard for mowing.

With reckless pace  
Their steps deface  
And what a shame to see  
The beaten path  
Where simple math  
And manners disagree.

Virginia Clinedinst

## AUTISM

Hopelessly reaching  
for some distant star,  
I grope my way  
through an eternal night  
not well-enough lit  
by the million  
nonexistant suns.

Elizabeth Doss



## REFLECTIONS FROM THE LAKE

The lake melts into the cool day.  
The leaves, hung on threads,  
Fall to winter's whisper  
To land as frail ships upon wasted sea,  
Sailing among reflected hunters...  
The hunters tired and chilled,  
Clothed in patches browned  
By dried blood and candle smoke.  
Their faces speak of silhouettes,  
With skin the color of the Ash  
And ashes of burnt out fires.  
From their leather pouches  
Dangle small squirrels smashed  
By slugs meant for bigger game.  
Gaunt, cold, unflinching in the dusk,  
Like troops back from a tired war,  
Shotguns slung on shoulders,  
Their reflected shadows walk  
In hump-back splendor on the lake,  
Single file among brake and cattails,  
Ending where water ends in the mud.

Addison Newton Likins



Idle Motion ¼ A.M.

The wind tries the latches  
the house's bones creak  
I float lidless on a dark lake  
devising monotones  
the clock unwinds out  
of time with my pulse  
out of time with rodent  
business in a wall  
in vain I summon sheep  
to leap my unleapable  
electrocuting fence  
Adam's atoms Eve's eves  
Satan's satins endlessly  
the wind desists  
meteoric sirens scratch darkness  
lidless on my dark lake  
I review guilts and demonology  
damn coffee  
hear the mouse's compromise  
with the baseboard  
envy the settling of its eyelids.

Fred Chiriboga

I once had a cloud named

Oliver but

it

rained.

Cherdi

## After Summer

Rich with a waft of near hay  
A perfume hanging low, mellow,  
To be drunk,  
Savored by the lungful;  
Warm with the wash of yellow  
Heavy in its draining--  
I watch with certain envy  
A lone falcon swing in low lazy circles  
To soar again,  
On a heaven swept snap of wind.

Sharon Everson

## WAITING FOR THE FIRE

I nibble on my hangnails  
and pace the ceiling-cracks  
considerate of the shy tenant(s)  
who flushes therefore is.  
Caliber of insomnia  
minus mg. of caffeine equals  
the problem's true gravity  
—please do not kick lightbulbs —  
my father's formula  
inapplicable for Fire  
I feel like dice balanced  
on corners.  
I jump up-down  
on the ceiling rudely  
till almost reaching  
the rug with my fingertips  
—activate your drain  
tenant(s) I'm lonely.

Fred Chiriboga



## Cinderblocked

Bluepapered cinderblock cubicles  
honeycombed in

asylum cell formation  
fostering harrowing stigmas  
of

tension tension tension  
and

boredom  
released by nightmare's escape.

A handpenciled L.O.V.E. entwined  
with emerald blossomed vines  
adorn a cinderblock square  
above unknown Paris designs:  
Collection 1972.

From dotted blackwhite electroniascreens  
Margaret Mead pleas for awareness  
while mammariated Sirens  
tassle gyrating treats for  
tense

## Man-Machines.

At Penn. State a book by  
Gailbraith lays abandoned on a  
ringstained ashed coffeetable

UPSIDE DOWN

in a dingy smokestale

cinderblock cell.

Candee Bechtel

## THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

A wondrous fear and awe—some sense of facuality had come along with me as i left her knee and started on my own for the first time down to the Crawdad hole. The whole thing seemed so true, although it wasn't exactly like the Parson Tounge had ever told us. She told it like she was right there, sitten by the side of the Lord as it all happened. Parson Tunge was too young to even have an outside chance of being there to see it, but still he tried to make us believe he had.

The Crawdad hole was the coolest place on the whole farm. Willows lapped the stream when even the gentlest wind arose. Waterbugs lay limp on the water so as not to attract attention to themselves and be eaten by the Crawdad. Some, who must have been younger, playfully backstroked over the rapids caused by protruding pebbles only to be applauded then gobbled by the little lobster.

On Saturday night the Darkies (we were never allowed to call them Black men, but that's what they were)

went to the Crawdad hole with their torches blazen, set a whole circle of camp fires and had themselves a break-up time. They'd start off by having fish, fried within an inch of its life, then lots and lots of peach cider, which I could never stand because it was so nauseatingly sweet, and sing and slap their thighs and hands to the tune of a broken-down fiddle my father gave that large lady to learn to play. She never did really learn.

Away into the night they would dance and sing, always being sure to keep a blur of head, hands and arms moving as though they were about to leave the body only to be caught just before they seemed to fly away.

I was never allowed to go there alone. My father always went with me. He said that not all of them worked on the farm; there were some from the levee. Those were the ones I was to stay away from. For some reason, unknown to all including my father, the levee workers had a grudge against men who had it good, white or black. Our



hands would never take to them if it weren't for the fact they were black.

Come around quarter past eleven or so the music would become a little more faint and voices, mixed with myriad forms of laughter, spilled into the noise void. They would all have a hard time quitting, but when the hamboning slowed down they unconsciously concerned that they were tired. As a finale she took me on her massive dimpled knee and began:

"Before you and me and all the people was born there warn't nothin' but the heaven for all the angels and the Lord to walk around in. There was big clouds and little clouds, and some was jus right for the little Cherubs to sit under when the weather was hot. Of course the Lord had hisself a nice big ol' cloud to sit under so the-at he wouldn't sweat none.

Ye-es, ther warn't nothin' but heaven, ther warn't no earth, ther watn't no sun and moon, ther warn't even any stars so dat the little cherubs could wish on them and have their wishes come true. An' every day was jus like a Sunday. All the angels and the cherubs would go down to the river that flowed through heaven when Gabe blowed his horn. Now Gabe, he was just a little fel-

ler then an' he warn't too good on the horn, but he put his entire soul into that blowin' so that all those who was comin would know it was time to come. They'd all go down to the river and thank the Lord for all the stuff they had. They thanked him for all the Fummament they had to drink, for all the fishes that was in heaven, and for all the little cherubs who were all cute as mice when they stop an' stare you right in the face. All day long they would pray to the Lawd an' give all kinds of thanks for a job well done.

Dats right, every day was just like a Sunday, except Saturdays when they'd all have a fish fry. They'd all sit around and have the nicest fish cakes, and flounder, and once in a while, on good fishing days, they'd have some fillet of sole that the fishermen got out of the river.

On one Saturday de Lawd was late comin' down to the fish fry, and he was a little late on account of he was making miricles in some far part of heaven. And for him, working on Saturdays was a little hard to take. But he comes walking down de road with his head held high in the air an'



takein' great big steps (I believe they was about twice as big as you is tall.) He was takein' such monstrolous steps because he had a honger on that suppassed all imagination, at least that what he told me. But, when he gets to the fish fry all the angels had already gone cause they thought he warn't commin. The little cherubs was all settin out under the clouds cause it was hot and their little bellies were bigger than blowfish. The only one there was little ol' Gabe and he was off at the end of the Lord's table a practicing of his horn.

"Hey Gabe," say the Lawd, "you got anymore fish left?"

"Yeah," says Gabe, we got a whole mess of fish cakes down her in dis basket, an' we only got one fillet of sole left though."

"Dat autta be enought," sa says the Lawd.

So he commences to eat just about everything in sight. He eats the fillet of sole first cause he likes that the best, y then he eats up all the flounder around and some herrin that Gabe didn't see, and all but one of the fish cakes.

"Whew," says Gabe, "you musta really had some honger on."

"Yessir, surpasses all imagination. But all that good eating done give me a powerful thirst. You got any fummament for me to drink?"

"Aw Lawd I think we drunk it all up because we didn't think you was--eh-- wait a minute Lawd, here's some fummament over here in dis bucket, but it don't look like much.

"Dat's alright," say the Lawd, "bring it over here."

So Gabe he thimble out the last of the fummament and he bring it over to the Lawd in a little shot glass.

"Hell Gabe, this ain't enough even to make it down to my belly."

"I's sorry Lawd, dats all we got."

"Dats all?"

Well the Lawd decides that he is gonna need some fummament to drink before his insides dry out. So he sit down on the end of the bench with Gabe and makes sure that the both of them



have to think how they gonna get some fummament.

"You got any ideas, Gabe."

"Nope" says Gabe, "You supposed to be the man with the brains."

"Well I'm working on it," says the Lawd.

"I don't know how your gonna take this idea Lawd, but how bout one of them miracles you is so famous for."

"Gabe, you know I don't like to work on Saturdays, it isn't good for my pancreas."

"I didn't think you'd like that idea."

"It ain't that Gabe, I just like to see things take their normal course."

"Oh," says Gabe.

"But we'll try it anyway."

So the Lawd, he raise back his bod ol head till he's lookin straight up into the air, close his eye real tight so dat he can't see nothin:

"Let der be some fummament," say the Lawd, "and when I say let there be some fummament, let there be a whole mess of fummament."

"Did it work Lawd?"

"How is I supposed to know, this miracle workin takes time. Besides, when I go to miracle ma ke in I don't do no slip shod job, I do things up right. Anyway it ain't easy; you got a cigarette?"

"Sure Lawd, here."

But no sooner had the Lawd got his cigarette lit than a drop of fummament comes down and puts it out.

"I like dat," says the Lawd.

"Wait a minute Lawd," says Gabe, "Look over yonder, what's that I see?"

"Is you blind Gabe, dat's the fummament I ordered commin down."

"Yeah, well, it looks like you have outdone yourself Lawd, look over der, yeh, jus look at all them cherubes."

Well I tell you doggie, it looked as if the Lawd had gotten hisself into one bag of troubles that he couldn't fight or miracleize his way out of. All the cherubes was up to their belly button in da fummament and all the angels wings was gettin' wet and sticky with the stuff. Even the Lawd was havin a hard time walkin' around in the junk.

"Aw Lawd," says Gabe, "look what you done now."

"Yeah shutap," say the Lawd, "it was all your idea warn't it."

"Sure but what you gonna do Lawd before we is all covered with dis here fummament."

"I ain't sure Gabe, you get any more ideas?"

"Sure Lawd, same as the last one."

"You know what happens



every time ya start making miracles, every miracle jus leads to another and there ain't no tellin where it's gonna stop."

"But you gotta do something, this junk is gettin' in my horn."

"Guess you is right," say the Lawd.

So the Lawd raise back his head so that it's looking straight up into the air.

"Let there be the sun, to dry up all of dis fummament das all over everything."

The Lawd sat down again a and started to light up another cigarette when he and Gabe both noticed that the weather was gettin' a little bit warm.

"Dat's too hot" say the Lawd.

"Whew, you is right Lawd, dat was too hot, but we still got too much fummament around here. Hey, look at my horn, it's all gummed up."

"I know," says the Lawd, we'll get all the mens to dig a whole bunch of ditches and we'll be able to drain off all dis here fummament. It'll take a bit of work but we got enough mens here so that we ought to be able ta do it. Gabe, you

call all the mens to work."

But when Gabe went to call all the mens to work they weren't nowheres to be seen. As s oon as they heard that der was work to be done they all left sayin they had more important things to do.

"Well Gabe, you and I is the only ones around, I guess we'dbetter get started."

"What do you mean we Lawd? Look what you and your smarty pants have done to my horn, I gotta go home and clean it out, besides, it's way past my practice time anyway."

"Yeah sure Gabe, weenee out on your own smelly idea. You is really a white man, pale on the inside. Sure Gabe, you go off and practice your ol' damn horn, Lawd knows you need it. Besides I got plans for you and your blow horn that'll turn your lungs inside out."

The Lawd was beside hisself with rage, but he took two aspirin and got back to his ol' self again.

"I sure hate workin' on Saturdays; man can't get no peace no matter how hard he tries. What am I gonna do so dat I don't have to dig a ditch?"

So the Lawd, he set awhile



in selfish thought. Then all of a sudden, like some big wind, he rears back his head so that it's looking straight up in the air.

"Let there be the earth --to drain off all dis here fummament."

"Man, that was hard work," say the Lawd as he lit up another cigarette-- "sure is a good thing ol' Gabe forgot his butts, I sure do need a relaxer."

As soon as the Lawd threw his match away he saw that all the fummament was draining off down on to the earth. So, with nothing else to do he figured he'd better sit down and supervise this here great drain off. Every so often he would take his flask, scoop some of the sticky stuff and drink it right there cause he still had a powerful thirst on and besides, miracle makein' on a Saturday was a-wearin' him out.

The Lawd look over at the earth and saw the fummament draining down on to it--only he also saw that there was still some land stickin' up where there warn't enough fum-

mament to cover it.

"Landsakes," say the Lawd, "look what I done done now. I done made too much earth and I got a whole mess of land stickin' up where the fummament ought to be. Everybody here already got their own land to work, so none of them cam go down and work. It's for sure there ain't be no begetting going on that I ain't heard tell of --('cept when ol Pious Paul's Bull got loose last week--) so there's nobody on the way. Well let's see--eh--maybe if I got some fishes and put them in the fummament it'll rise up over the land."

But that didn't make one difference. even though the Lawd put in all the ingredients for fish cake, all the flounder around heaven, as much herrin as he could think of, and one or two fillet of soles.

"Sure is a lot of land down der--maybe if I just flood with more fummament. Naw.

"Dat ain't right we already got enough fummament and besides, this stuff is so syrupy there ain't nobody gonna be around who'll want any more of it. We'll let the land be. Still I ain't



got nobody to work it. I can't have a whole mess of land and nobody to work it. I knew I was right, one miracle just leads to another, and since there ain't no mens around here I'm just gonna have to make me a man."

So the Lawd rears back his head 'till it's lookin' straight up into the sky-- and a big clump of dirt comes fallen' down out of the clouds.

"What's this for, say % the Lawd, I didn't even say nothin' yet, besides I wanted a man, not a stupid clump of dirt. What am I gonna do with this thing anyway? Ain't you guys never seen a man before --fine craftsmen you are--I'll bet you ain't never even heard of a man before."

The Lawd was more right than he knowed, cause he was the first one that ever got born'd and got to go to heaven, and he had to think up all the angels, and the cherubes, and yeah even ol' Gabe too.

Well the Lawd didn't know what he was gonna do with that dry ol' hunk of dirt so he just sat there on the bench holding the pile in both hands, sort of mulling it, mulling it over

with his fingertips.

Then the idea comes to him that if he wants a man he's just gonna have to go out and make hisself one. So he takes the clump of dirt--that brown ol' dirt, and mixes it with a little bit of that left over fummament and begin to carve hisself out a man. So he fashions and molds, pinches and scrapes, and pokes and prods around for about a half hour. As soon as the man is all whittles out it comes alive, stands up, and starts takin notice.

"What your name man?"

"Adam," say the man.

"Adam what?"

"Jus Adam," say the man, "nothin' else-- Hay why you asking all these questions, I ain't done nothing."

"Where you come Adam?"

"Now how am I supposed to know that? I thought you was the one with all the brains."

"Is you married Adam?"

"Naw, I ain't married, what would I do with some ol' woman anyway?"

Now at that the Lawd had to stop for a moment. He ain't never heard of a man what was worth his salt that didn't have a woman around to see that he kept his money straight and to make sure he didn't stay out too late on Saturday night or he would be too tired to work



the next day. Especially he tooted to work the land or to see that the grass didn't get too high. If there was one thing the Lawd didn't want was to see his land go to pot.

So the Lawd put ol' Adam to sleep with sort of a pill or junk and while he was sleeping he took one of Adam's ribs that looked like it was a little crooked anyway, covered it with that last piece of fish cake he forgot to eat, and fashioned himself out a woman with all the curves and places what's nice that the Lawd saw in all of heaven. Then he lay her down beside Adam so that when ol' Adam wakes up there was this woman lying right along his side with all the covers and the one good pillow.

"Who you," say Adam?

"I's Eve," says she in her nicest, sweetest drawl, "I's your wife."

"Hey Lawd, is dat true?" say Adam.

"Dat's right," say the Lawd.

"I sure is, honey pie."

"I don't want no woman,"

say Adam. "I quit- there ain't nothing I'm gonna do. I just don't want no woman."

"Ya gotta have one Adam- she'll do good for ya," say the Lawd.

"Sure," say Adam, "good like making ya do the dishes,

or curl her hair, or she'll call ya some stupid' funny names like sugar sheep or something really dumb like Lambykins, Black."

"If you don't stop, I'll take out another rib and there'll be two, maybe more."

"Jes, O.K. Lawd, dat's something nobody can handle- one's a plenty."

"Well that's better," say the Lawd. "Now look what ya gotta do is down on the earth and..."

"How we gonna get there," say Adam, "you never even thought of that Eve, dumb-dumb."

"You shut up your mouth, I get you there, Jus let me worry about that. I got some digs all fixed up fer ya. There's a good house, with running water, and a sink. There's all kinds of fruit fer ya to eat and I made a whole lot of animals fer ya to talk to when you get mad at each other. Only Eve, I want you to name them all cause I got too much to do around here. Adam, you can plant anything you find jus so long as you keep the place up -- it don't pay to have bad tenants. Oh yeah, I got this special brand of Macintosh growin down there and I'd appreciate it if you'd jus let them be. I'll bet they'll bring a good price come



autumn market, so if ya don't mind, jus let them set there."

"Dat's O.K. with me," say Adam. "I don't like apples anyway."

So the Lawd put Adam and Eve down in the Garden of Eden -- that's what Eve called it cause it sounded so pretty. Adam commenced a plantin' all the food they needed like wheat, corn, beans, peas, and beets. Eve took to doing the housework like cleaning and cooking and washin' the bath towels. She also started naming the animals. She named the gazelle, the flamingo, the antelope, and the thrush. She even let Adam have a hand at it cause he thought woman's work was so easy. Adam named the wort-hog, guilla monster, ~~sardvark~~, skunk, and grouper.

"See," says Adam, "it ain't so hard."

Well one day Adam was off a-mending fences and Eve was out near the orchard hanging the towels out to dry when out of the grass comes this long slimy cotton mouth. He comes a-creepin' by the trees and fence post so that he ain't more than ten feet away from the towel line.

"Lawdy me," she shrieked, "get outta here, shoo, get it

out, fly, move, help, Lawdy Mighty, help!" And she pick up a stone that was lying close by her foot and throwed it right for the snake which was already making tracks, and if you ever seen a snake makin tracks, well you know he's scared. But she throw that stone anyway. Now you know there ain't be a woman born yet that could throw straight -- so instead of heading for the snake it goes a sailing right for the Lawd's special tree of Mackintosh. Plump, one hits the ground.

"Lawdy me -- look what I done done now. Adam sure is gonna be mad. What am I gonna do. Let's see here - hum - look at dis apple -- sure is nice, and red and firm, smells real good too. I'ts much too nice to give to ol sugar sheeps and wort hogs. I'll take it over and see if ol Adam wants a bit."

"H ey Adam-looky here what I got."

"What dat, woman?"

"Dis here an apple I got from that tree over yonder. Ya want a bite- it real good-looky here--it's real good."

"Aw woman, what you want to come around bothering me for. You know I don't like apples. They ain't good for my lumbaga. Why don't you go off and play with that moun-tain of a Bramasortus or



whatever ya call it, or mess with them other animals that follow you everywhere."

Well this starts Eve crying.

"Oh Adam, you never like anything I bring ya, ya never like none of the animals that come around. Ya never buy me anything. You don't pay no attention to me, never take me out, and if I was dead, you wouldn't even love me no more or nothing."

Well you know that when a woman starts a crying and blubbering and fretting and t tekling her man he don't pay no attention to her you know she's gonna get some action.

"Aw, alright," says Adam, "give me the damn ol' apple."

Not only did he eat the apple but he bought Eve a new dress and took her out to a place like Motor Mouth Harry's and didn't get back 'till four-o'clock the next morning.

"Hey Adam."

"Ehn."

"Hey Adam, wake up."

"Wha-who dat-what time is it?"

"Dis is the Lawd and it's eleven-thirty. How come you still sleepin'?"

"Eh, we been workin' pretty hard," says Adam 'cause he knows he's in a fix.

"Yeah well, how come the fence is down, the field's full of weeds, and what's that all over Eve?"

"That's an apron," says Adam.

"That's a dress," says the Lawd. "Wake up woman! Where you get that dress?"

"Adam give it to me," say Eve.

"Thanks alot," says Adam.

Well the truth was out and the Lawd was pretty tufted at the idea of his people lying to him. But when he found out about that apple he shook with the Blue Willies from ear to toe and back.

"What you gonna do Lawd?" say Adam.

"You all better get out of here before I blows up, and you better pay me the money you got from the last harvest before you leave. I knew I should have flooded this place a long time ago. I might do that still."

So Adam pays the Lawd a dollar and thirty-seven cents, which is big money when the dollar's sound, takes Eve by the ear and leaves the garden for good and not one of the animals followed like they used to.

We were all amazed-- all of us except the Crawdad which had heard it so many times before. Most of the levee men had gone out for some booze. There were only a few of us left. The night air had a chill so most of the

hands went back to the bunks.

I asked what happened to Adam and Eve.

She squinted her saucer eyes to make sure nobody was

listening who shouldn't hear what she was about to say.

"The last I heard of them, Eve had a whole slew of kids and Adam was working down on the levee for ninety-two cents an hour."

Marc Taylor



WAR: 1969

We dwell with catholic casuistry  
Upon the subtle weight of bodies  
ready beached  
and waiting to be shipped,  
distinguished with a posthumous button,  
summarily entrenched in maggot warrens  
and rosters of honors forever...  
We cannot hope to learn to lift the pall  
by dint of centuries settled on our minds,  
So let our best morticians  
Carry them to rest  
And with each desolate shore-sand shovelful  
our islands of indictment put on weight.

Deborah Fairfield

campus police

That cop car is always  
coming out of dark corners  
and staring at street lamps  
like a goddamned cockroach would  
before streaking like hell over  
a kitchen floor.

Cherdi

## I AM DYING, CHARLES

I am dying, Charles, dying;  
Drowning actually,  
In a river without bottom  
Without shores, without logs,  
Nothing to grasp but myself  
Or a million other people  
Drowning three inches away.  
All of us in the same plasma  
Toward the same edge of the same earth.  
We are dying, Mr. Baudelaire, dying;  
And you knew it all the time.

I am leaving, Father, Leaving;  
Dropping out actually,  
I'm sure I can tie shoes  
Rather than slip them them on,  
Listen rather than speak,  
But I'd rather rather.  
I can pick marshmallows  
Up in my teeth, I've done it before;  
Did it before you. But now  
I'm leaving, Father, leaving  
And we knew it all the time.

Bob Plummer



A Fable

Tiny moth only  
came to consummate himself  
with the candle's flame.

But see the last wax  
harden cold and tiny moth  
in darkness waiting...

waiting anyway?  
Perhaps tomorrow morning  
that fool will cry

I have lost again!  
But not now. He lies waiting  
with tiny moth faith

just as though a spark  
from his own heart will ignite  
light gone out again.

Cherdi

kalaidéscope passion

ebony eyes searching  
in vain  
white  
throbbing bodies  
feel the piercing  
tongues of blue cold steel  
searing through  
bundles of flesh  
blood  
hot, scalding  
boiling with passion  
surging and raging  
through  
channels of  
red  
sweeping silently  
along disguised  
in veils of varied hues;

red: orange: violet:

converging, conjugal,  
violent peaks of  
atoms loosed in  
displays of color  
spasms of emotion  
rise---riot---  
then come to rest  
while  
soft breaths  
fall on moist cheeks  
of peach and apricot.

Candee Bechtel



## OLD

In the afternoon  
she mended socks  
and cried softly  
as a tree after rain —  
Because the sons  
she'd taught to pray  
had learnt to kneel  
on handkerchiefs to keep  
their sunday-clothes  
from dust.

Fred Chiriboga

### For My First Daughter on her First Pinch

Last carnival night, she will climb  
proud circle where painted horses  
buck wooden heads suspended,  
calliope night.

Tightened hair pulled  
in rubberband ponytail  
we shall wheel through paint,  
descend to sawdust.

His cracked hand will catch  
her white rear flesh  
to mark in carnival purple,  
dead desire.

Her amazed head will jerk  
hair on her shoulders down  
while painted horses spin  
through splintered sound,  
and, daughter, palely lip out  
unrehearsed curse, shift stillborn legs  
to customary woman  
and your own proud circled night.

Margaret Horne Steiner 27

## CEMENT

I am watching this cement  
It is cold, calculated, rough  
Cracking as is the society that created it  
Built on unsolid principle it crumbles

It is incapable of movement  
Its birth from separate grains of sand  
From dying seas and contaminated shores  
What power has made them inseparable

What power? The power of money, influence  
Mysteriously coerced against nature and God  
Created to save the ground from the trample  
of the weary and worn millions.

Where is the sensation of the sea  
The Lapping of the water?  
Gone to one another as cement  
As society and money and truth,

For as in cement when truth coagulates  
It becomes no more than hard  
Unfeeling, unyielding prejudice  
And its separate beauties are lost.

Roger Buchanan



3 A.M.

The ash tray's full again,  
And the coffee's too bitter to drink.  
All of the crosswords are filled in,  
Every I and L sits in its box,  
The letter loops are blacked.  
It's too late to walk  
And I couldn't go alone.  
Like a well, cold,  
Drained and ringing hollow,  
I've not a tear.  
The bed's too soft or too hard or too....

The dawn will be grey  
If it comes at all.

Sharon Everson

## S O L O

Sometimes  
the most meaningful  
melodies of our lives  
can best be played  
on the simplest  
instrument.

Love--  
a four note theme--  
is a sequence  
on the same motif  
as a worthless  
damn.

Elizabeth Doss

POET and CRITIC

Pigeon poked first head,  
one wing followed in a preen.  
It spied a hanging light  
and thought to perch awhile.

In tired teacher's third floor room  
where I climb Wednesdays,  
early morning half-hazed eyed  
one hundred flights up

That pigeon sat.  
One brilliant splat of pigeon glory  
exploded on desk, and my poems,  
waiting, caught the loose remains

of abundant, bug-filled gizzard.  
It has come to this--that in  
my crucial, twenty-first year,  
a pigeon has bombarded

my fairly peaceful world  
to whitely say in smears  
that what I have to say  
is worth just shit.

I confer with its red eye  
and I agree, agree.  
I grab my trivial words,  
and I hate pigeons more and more.

Margaret Horne Steiner



## A Modest Proposal

I want to make for you a bird  
born with willow feathers and whitened wings  
which would build for you contentedly  
a home within the resting of my arms.

Yet to make a bird is far beyond me  
I can not recombine my dreams for you  
To fall into skylessly. What good are wings  
without the sky, or freedom when imposed?

Then I shall rise to be the sky  
Where you may shift securely as you change  
to warm my breezes and my life  
with new directions. What good is the sky  
without your wings; what good am I?

Marc Taylor

## TRIVIA

although she wears those things as though they  
made a difference (underneath we all  
are naked) in the clothed parade  
of living thus, so this must fall

into nothing. it is more than useless  
yet she knows not. let her go on  
and dress herself; she could not guess  
at nakedness if clothes were gone.

Kari Funk

## COUNTRY BOY IN A CITY

With the dim street lights  
Sleeping in your bedroom  
You never get the chance,  
Through luminescent eyelids,  
To see what you don't look like.

Scraping of cars on wind panes  
Doesn't quite fulfill a desire  
To hear a whippoorwill sing  
Or a buttercup sigh or see  
A tree cry in the morning.

Neon blinkers, needle sirens  
Slash a two-lane highway  
Into your dreams and make  
You sweat blood that drops  
Into deep abysses.

Red sign blinks yes and  
You walk the cobbled  
Wilderness and feel the chagrin  
Of a man in bed who can't  
See what his wife really looks like.

Addison Newton Likins



# SONNET

I spent a week in dark and learned my ears  
(unwilling though my eyes to yield their place)  
And booming space a new dimension gained  
With every shaft of sound on lightless drum.  
Taut nerves sparked loud to echoing fears,  
Ears stretched to sudden silence, 'til my face  
Itself turned to behold the sounds and strained  
To catch which blindness they were crackling from.  
Though deafened by delight ( and sightless tears)  
My ears began, at last, with visual grace,  
To organize the noises in my brain,  
And I could hear to picture whence they'd come,  
Thus, manifold though stillness now may call,  
I never learned how not to see--at all.

Deborah Fairfield

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